A SECOND

LETTER

FROM A

Friend in the Country,

TO HIS

Friend in LONDON.

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LONDON,

Printed in the Year 1717.

21 May 1717

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SIR,

MY former meeting with a kind Reception, I therefore take the Freedom to send this *Second Letter* on the same Subject; being very desirous to put a stop (if possible) to those unnatural Heats and Animosities which at present disturb the happy Repose of your *Friends*. For I find that the *Press* has been furnish'd with fresh *Satyrs*, and the Author of a *Character* is come forth, with greater Warmth than ever, against his Brethren.

He intimates a Displeasure with my *Letter*, on several Accounts, and especially because I perswade him to leave off his Satyr, and learn to love those whom he reflects upon. But let him treat me and my Work as he pleases, and think me *dull*, if he will; these Things move me not to be angry with him; I shall yet pursue my first Design, and with all the good Temper I can, shew him the Unreasonableness of his Resentments, and try once more at perswading him to love his Fellow-Christians, and pay that Respect to the

Miniſtry, as by the Teſtimony of the Scriptures appears to be due to them.

He ſets himſelf up as a Champion for Truth, and imagins he is dictated by the good Spirit in his Work: But I would intreat him to conſider, and all others who imploy themſelves the ſame Way, that *Satyr* and *Railery* can never be of any Service to Religion; but on the contrary, are a wounding, and Reproach to it.

We are requir'd in the Goſpel to be *Followers of God, as dear Children*, i. e. we ſhould ſtrive to be like him in all his imitable Perfections; and we then come neareſt this bleſſed Pattern, when we love our Brethren, for *God is Love*; and nothing is more evident than this, That they who are born of God, will love one another. By this it will appear, that God is our Father; for as St. *John* obſerves, * *Herein the Children of God, and the Children of the Devil are manifeſt: He that doth not Righteouſneſs, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his Brother.*

The Holy Spirit can never lead us into Strife and Contention, they who are guided thereby, will diſcover a quite contrary Temper; Envy and Detraction is not of God, theſe proceed from another Root, even from the *evil One*, the *Prince of Darkneſs*. The *Father of Lights* teaches us to be merciful and gentle, to be loving and kind, and to have Compaſſion one towards another. And ſays the Apoſtle, † *Beloved, if God ſo*

* 1 *John* 3. 10. † *Ver.* 18, 19.

loved

loved us, we ought to love one another; and hereby we ſhall know that we dwell in him, and he in us, and that he hath given us of his Spirit.

St. *Jude* tells us, That *Michael the Archangel*, when he was *contending with the Devil, durſt not bring a railing Accuſation againſt him*, becauſe he would not behave himſelf like an evil Spirit. This ſhows us, that the *Author's Satyr* cannot be a *godly* Rage, nor do ſuch *Rhimes* flow from the Divine Influence.

One Part of the Deſcription which St. *Paul* gives of *Charity*, is, That it thinketh no ill; but in the *Satyrical Papers* lately publiſhed, a great many ill Things are ſaid, and ſevere Reflections thrown on ſeveral Perſons, which plainly ſhows that a good Spirit did not govern the Authors of them: For the Spirit of God is a Spirit of Love; and *Love*, we are told, *will hide a Multitude of Faults*. And therefore I would adviſe thoſe who are for finding ſo much Fault with others, firſt to look at Home, and ſee what manner of Spirit they are of; and when once they have ſet themſelves in order, they'll find leſs Cauſe (as well as Diſpoſition) to be angry with their Neighbours.

In the former *Papers*, as well as in what is ſince *publiſhed* by the *Author of a Character*, ſome of your Miniſters are treated with an uncommon Rudeneſs and Indecency, and the *Satyrs* repeat the Reflections with great Warmth, and ſtrongly inſiſt on the Truth

and Juſtice of them. As this ingaged me at my firſt ſetting out to inquire into the Characters of the ſaid Perſons, ſo I have again imployed my ſelf in that Work, and with Pleaſure I find that my firſt Account of them is very true; therefore, though my Antagoniſt is pleaſed to ſay, that I had my Relations from partial Men, I muſt beg leave to tell him, he is greatly miſtaken; and ſuch a Suggeſtion, together with the Bitterneſs of Spirit that runs through the whole of his Performance, plainly ſhows, that he's more ſtrongly attach'd to a *Party* than to *Truth*; and becauſe *G--n* eſpecially endeavours to promote true Piety and Holineſs, rather than fall in with the *little Managements* and *tricking Arts*, which ſome are ſaid to be too fond of, therefore the *Satyr* is eſpecially pointed againſt him.

But that I may ſhow the *Angry Poet* his Miſtake, and do as much Juſtice as I can to the Perſons he has injur'd, by his falſe Repreſentations, I ſhall now give a more particuluar Account of them.

" *C--le* has been an eminent *Preacher* up-
" upwards of 20 Years amongſt you, unblame-
" able in his Converſation, and of good Re-
" pute amongſt all who know him, whoſe
" *Works praiſe him in the Gate*, and diſcover
" him to be a Man of an extraordinary *Genius*,
" whoſe Thoughts are clear, and his Judg-
" ment ſound, which is manifeſt by his juſt
" and ſolid way of Reaſoning; and his *Re-*
" *marks* have too much *nervous Truth* in them

" to

" to be confuted or baffled by *frothy Satyr.*

" *P--ce* is a Man of a ſober Life and Con-
" verſation, experienced by thoſe who hear
" him, to come forth to the Miniſtry, from a
" real Conviction, furniſhed with an inlight-
" ed Judgment: His Teſtimony is received
" with great Satisfaction, and by his hearty
" and zealous Application to the Work, gives
" good Grounds to believe, that he'll approve
" himſelf an able, faithful and uſeful Preacher.

" *G---n*, notwithſtanding the Reproaches
" caſt on him, is a juſt, and an honeſt Man,
" who is well-gifted for, and regularly admit-
" ted to the Work of the Miniſtry; his Do-
" ctrine is ſound, and with unwearied Dili-
" gence he labours to advance Truth. And
" though many Deſigns have been formed a-
" gainſt him, and little Arts uſed to ſpoil his
" Reputation, and ruin him in his worldly
" Concerns, as alſo to render him uſeleſs in the
" *Miniſtry*, yet *the God whom he ſerves, hath*
" *hitherto preſerv'd him*, and has blaſted the
" Deſigns of his Adverſaries; inſomuch that
" amongſt the many things pretended to be
" charged on him, the moſt zealous of his Ac-
" cuſers have not been able to give one ſingle
" Inſtance of Irregularity in his Life and Con-
" verſation, or Unſoundneſs in Doctrine:
" All which does plainly prove his Innocency
" and Integrity, and lays open the impo-
" tent Reſentments of ſuch, who only for Par-
" ty-ſake, and not for any juſt Cauſe, riſe up
" againſt him, to whom he may ſay with the
" Apoſtle *Paul, Am I become your Enemy for tel-*
" *ling you the Truth?*

Thus, in a narrow Compaſs, as well as I could, I have given you a fair and juſt Account of the Men that are ſo much miſrepreſented in the *Character*, &c. And though in thoſe Papers they are allowed to be Preachers amongſt you, yet the Author gives them very hard Names, as * *falſe Teachers*, *Impoſters*, &c. and *G--n*'s Doctrine he calls, *Guſts of Satan*, and *Jargon*, which proceed from his *erring Tongue*. And hereupon he urges, That they ought to be diſplaced from the Work of the Miniſtry, as not being truly fitted for it, or rightly called thereto. But theſe are only great ſwelling Words of Vanity, for I doubt not but to make it appear, that if they muſt be rejected, as not rightly qualified, and call'd, that there is no certain Rule by which we can judge, that there are any rightly fitted and call'd amongſt your Preachers.

Herein at preſent I ſhall ſatisfie my ſelf, that according to the Principles and Practice of their Friends, they muſt be eſteem'd Perſons truly fitted for, and orderly called to the *Miniſtry*.

As to the Gifts that fit for the *Miniſtry*, an approved † Author of your own thus ſtates the Matter; ſuppoſing the Queſtion to be, What makes a *Miniſter?* or how comes a Man to be a *Miniſter?* The Anſwer is, *By the inward Power and Vertue of the Spirit of God— Having received the true Knowledge of Things Spiritual by the Spirit of God (without which they cannot be known)* and being by the ſame *in*

* *Anſ. to the* Enfield *Letter*, p. 4. l. 16, 21. † *Barc. Apo.* p. 280.

Meaſure

Measure purified and sanctified, he comes thereby to be called to minister to others; being able to speak from a living Experience of that he himself is a Witness; and therefore * *knowing the Terrors of the Lord, he is fit to perswade Men.* And his Words and Ministry proceed from the inward Power and Vertue, reach to the Heart of his Hearers, and make them approve of him, and be subject to him.

Now that the Brethren aforesaid are qualified according to the Judgment of this great Man, is plain beyond any just Exception; they are *called by the inward Power and Vertue*, and they declare to others what they *feell in their own Hearts.* And I Appeal to your Friends in general, Whether it is not known that they *preach from a living Experience*; nay, I may address my self to the Consciences of their Accusers, Whether the *Body of your People* does not experience their Ministry to be such as proceeds from a Divine Assistance, and so reaches to the Hearts of such as wait to hear them. And I have lately heard *G--n* declare in one of your publick Meetings, That the Love of God being warm on his Heart, he was constrained to deliver his Testimony; and I observ'd it was attended to very seriously, and receiv'd with all the Marks of Pleasure, and Satisfaction of Mind, by the Auditory.

But besides this inward Call, and Preparation of the Spirit, they have the Approbation of the *Morning Monthly*, and *Quarterly Meet-*

* 2 *Cor.* 5. 11.

ings,

ings, and according to the prudent Meaſures you uſe in the ſaid Meetings, to prevent any Diſorders in the Miniſtry, they have their Certificates, by which they are known to be approv'd, and may be accepted, if they are call'd to preach where perſonally they are not known. Before I paſs this, I ſhall obſerve, that it ſeems very ſtrange that any Perſon pretending to be a *Friend*, or to have any Love for them, can reflect on G--*n* for having a Tone in his Delivery, ſince a Reflection of this Nature muſt faſten on ſome other Perſons, and ſuch, perhaps, for whom they may have the greateſt Veneration.

But here I would not be miſtaken, or have any one think that I intend to exalt the ſaid Perſons above the reſt of their Brethren, no, this is not my Deſign; for I know you have ſeveral amongſt you of excelling Gifts and Parts, who have many Years been bright Examples to the Flock, and have appeared bold and able Champions in the Cauſe of Truth, in the worſt of Times; and who, no doubt, are very much grieved at theſe Diviſions, for which their Souls will mourn in ſecret.

I ſhall not Repent that I have undertaken this Task, if I can but prevail, ſo that an End may be put to the preſent Contentions; and therefore I moſt earneſtly recommend it to your Friends, to do all that they can to accompliſh this deſirable Work; for ſo long as this Quarrel remains, the Peace of the Church will be broken, and all her Diſcipline rendred uſeleſs. And here I ſhall inſert a

Paſſage

Paſſage out of † Mr. *Fox*'s Works, which, I think, is very much to the preſent Purpoſe. He ſays, " God is a God of Order, and not of " Confuſion. And the Apoſtle ſaith to the " Church of Chriſt, *Let all things be done* " *decently, and in order.* So then there is " nothing to be done undecently, out of the " Order of the peaceable Truth, for God is " not the Author of Confuſion, or Tumults, " or Unquietneſs, but of Peace in all the " Churches of the Saints : And therefore, all " unquiet, and undecent diſorderly Spirits, " with the Power and Spirit of God, they " muſt be admoniſhed, to the peaceable Spi- " rit of God in them, and with it judge, " out the contrary ; elſe the Church of Chriſt " in its Power and peaceable Spirit, can have " no Unity with them ; but with the ſpiritual " Power of Chriſt judge that undecent, con- " fuſed, tumultuous, unquiet, diſorderly Spi- " rit.

You have juſtly been eſteem'd a formidable Body, on the Account of that Oneneſs of Mind that has been obſerv'd in your Managements, but if theſe Practices of Printing againſt each other, continues, you'll be divided, and Truth will greatly ſuffer thereby. Inteſtine Jars are very deſtructive to all Communities : *Joſephus* tells us, That the greateſt Occaſion of the Overthrow of *Jeruſalem*, was their *Factions* and *Diviſions*, inſomuch that he obſerves, That * *the Seditious ſubdued and*

† Fox's *Goſpel-Truth demonſtrated*, p. 858. * *Joſephus* l. 6. c. 7.

took

took the City, and the Romans *only ſubdued and took the Seditious.*

I would intreat the angry Penmen to conſider, that their Works do abundance of Miſchief in the World, while they thus Lampoon their Preachers, and alſo reflect on private Perſons, who make a conſiderable Appearance in the World, not only for their Subſtance, but for their Integrity much more. The Reputation of a Man is not a light thing, and therefore to ſtab this, is the worſt of Murder; I ſhall therefore recommend to all ſuch a Paſſage I have taken from a late Celebrated † Writer, in a Diſcourſe of his on *Evil Speaking*. He ſays, "I will put the Caſe at "the beſt, that the Matter of the Slander is "true, yet no Man's Reputation is conſide-"rably ſtain'd, tho' never ſo deſervedly, with-"out great Harm and Damage to him; and "'tis great odds but the Matter by paſſing "thro' ſeveral Hands is aggravated beyond "Truth, every one out of his Bounty being "willing to add ſomething to it. But if the "Evil we ſay is not true (as is the preſent "Caſe) 'tis an Injury done *to our Neighbour* "beyond Imagination, and beyond all poſſi-"ble Reparation; and tho' we ſhould do our "utmoſt afterwards towards their Vindica-"tion, yet that will make but little amends; "becauſe the Vindication ſeldom reaches ſo "far as the Reproach, and becauſe Men are "neither ſo commonly forward to ſpread the

† Tillotſon, p. 8, 9.

"Vin-

" Vindication, nor is it ſo eaſily receiv'd after " ill Impreſſions are made.

'Tis obſerv'd by * Mr. *Barclay*, " That tho' " all have a Liberty to *Speak* or *Propheſie* by " the *Spirit*, when moved thereunto, yet there " are ſome who are particularly call'd to the " Work of the *Miniſtry*; and therefore are fit- " ted of the Lord for that Purpoſe, whoſe " Work is more conſtantly and particularly " to inſtruct, exhort, admoniſh, overſee, and " watch over their Brethren; and that as " there is ſomething more incumbent on them " in that Reſpect, than upon every common " Believer, ſo alſo, as in that Relation, there " is due to them from the Flock ſuch Obe- " dience and Subjection, as is mention'd in " theſe Teſtimonies of the Scripture, *Heb.* 13. " 7. 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 12, 13. 1 *Tim.* 5. 7. 1 *Pet.* 5. 5.

They who read over the *Satyrical Character*, will ſoon ſee how much the Author deviates from this Rule, when, inſtead of highly eſteeming the Miniſters for their Work-ſake, he ſlights and deſpiſes them; for in the room of double Honour, he loads them with double Diſgrace; and beſides, theſe Proceedings are directly contemning that Order which Chriſt has placed in his Church for their Rule and Government: For as † Mr. *Barclay* ſays, " Beſides thoſe who labour in the Word and " Doctrine, there are alſo Elders, who tho' " they be not moved to frequent Teſtimony " by way of Declaration in *Words*, yet as ſuch " as are grown up in the Experience of the

* Apo. p. 324. † Pag. 324, 325.

bleſſed

" bleſſed Work of Truth in their Hearts—
" care and look that nothing be wanting, but
" that Peace, Love, Unity, Concord, and
" Soundneſs be preach'd in the Church of
" Chriſt.

By this it ſeems very plain, that it does not become a ſingle Man, or ſome particular Perſons to fall foul on, and uſe their Brethren as they pleaſe; no, it concerns the Elders to take " care that all ſuch Diſorders be rectified, that ſo none may ſet at nought, nor deſpiſe their Fellow-Chriſtians. And ſince the Time for your *Anniverſary Meeting* draws nigh, I hope you will take all due Care to ingage the *Fathers in your Iſrael* to take this Matter into their Conſiderations, and I ſhall greatly rejoyce to underſtand that they have been directedto ſuch Meaſures as may put out the preſent Flame, and lay a Foundation for a laſting Peace amongſt you; and if you learn to *live in Love and Peace, the God of Love and Peace will delight to dwell amongſt you.* But if Wars and Fightings ſtill remain, and bitter Envyings are continued, nothing can be expected but Confuſion, and every evil Work.

The way to be at † Peace, is to reſiſt the Beginnings of Strife; for how great a Matter will a little Fire kindle? A few miſplaced Words many times begins a Quarrel, though the Storm ought by Prudence and mutual Forgiveneſs to be laid as ſoon as it begins to riſe; Continuance of Anger makes thoſe People that are hot, to be more hot; it chafes

† *James* 3. 5.

and

and fires them the more. A Diſeaſe taken in Time, admits of Help, or ſome Mitigation, which will not yield to all the moſt prudent Methods of Phyſick that are uſed after it becomes ſtrong and obſtinate; therefore the Wiſe Man adviſes us, *to leave off Contention before it be meddled with*; i. e. we are ſo early to retire from all Contention, that as ſoon as it appears, and before we have engaged in it, we muſt break it off; and thus we ſhould learn to be of a * *meek and quiet Spirit, which in the Sight of God is of great Price.* Then we ſhall *be all of one Mind, having Compaſſion one of another:* † *Love as Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwiſe bleſſing, knowing that we are thereunto called, that you ſhould inherit a Bleſſing.*

I ſhall conclude what I have to ſay on this Head, with giving you one Paſſage more from the Works of ‖ Mr. *Fox* before recited. "*Chriſt* "ſaith (in the 15th of *John*) who hath all "Power in Heaven and Earth given to him; "*This is my Commandment, that ye love one a-* "*nother*— *For herein*, ſaith Chriſt, *is my Fa-* "*ther* glorified, *that you bear much Fruit; as* "*the Father hath loved me, ſo have I loved* "*you; continue ye in my Love.* Chriſtians not "continuing in the Love of Chriſt, with "which he has loved them, they cannot bring "forth Fruits ſo that cannot glorifie Chriſt, "nor the Father; *For if you keep my Command-* "*ments, ye abide in my Love, even as I kept*

* 1 Pet. 3. 4. † *Ver.* 8. ‖ Pag. 283.

"*my*

" *my Father's Commandments, and abide in his*
" *Love.* So that here Chriſtians may ſee,
" that they that abide not in the Love, but
" in the Enmity, they have not the Com-
" mandments of Chriſt. *And ye are my Friends,*
" *if ye do whatſoever I have commanded you;*
" *and this is my Commandment, that ye love*
" *one another, as I have loved you.* And ſo it
" is plain, that theſe, called Chriſtians, that
" love not one another, are no Friends to
" Chriſt Jeſus, neither know his Power nor
" Doctrine.

Sir, I ſhall now end this Letter only with deſiring you to excuſe my Freedom, in giving you this repeated Trouble; I can aſſure you I have no other View than that of the Peace and Tranquility of your Friends; and having once more freely told them my Mind in this Affair, I ſhall concern my ſelf no further, but leave the Event to Providence. And as I have no ill Will to any Perſon, ſo I hope none will be diſpleaſed with me for attempting to reconcile thoſe who are at Variance. I pray God to direct all your Conſultations and Endeavours, that they may terminate in putting an End to all Strife and Debate, that Truth and Peace may flouriſh amongſt you. I remain,

SIR,

Your moſt obliged Friend,
and Humble Servant,

Enfield,
May 21, 1717.